

Keynote Speech to the Strategic NSS FY18 Budget Forum  
Congressman Doug Lamborn (R-CO-05)  
June 16, 2017  
Washington, D.C.

# “Elevating the Importance of Space: A Call to Action”

## *Introduction / DoD Topline Debate*

Good morning! Thank you, Doug [Loverro], and it’s great to be back for the second one of these, and I have to say I appreciate the location being here on the Hill.

I am so encouraged that Secretary Wilson was here this morning, and that she has spent so much of her time on the job so far getting back up to speed on space issues, including of course out learning about what’s going on in Colorado Springs.

I’m delighted to be here with my good friends and colleagues, Jim Bridenstine, who Co-Chairs the Space Power Caucus with me, and Brian Babin. I’m very grateful for Brian’s leadership as Chair the Space Subcommittee on SST<sup>1</sup>.

I also would be remiss if I didn’t thank Fiscal Track and the Mitchell Institute for their hard work in organizing this event, as well as all of the wonderful industry partners who are hosting. Thanks for the work that all of you do.

We’ve spent this week on the House Armed Services Committee digging into the DoD topline, or overall spending amount, especially regarding what’s needed to rebuild readiness. We heard testimony from Secretary Mattis and Chairman Dunford that funding the requirements on the Unfunded Priority Lists would make our military stronger and our country safer. I’m hopeful that we will get to a \$640 billion topline in the NDAA this year, and be able to do the hard, bipartisan and bicameral work needed to appropriate a similar number. As easy as it is to get caught up in numbers this time of year, we also need to see beyond that. As Chairman Thornberry said this week that the real “issue is what those numbers provide for the men and women who serve, and what security the budget provides to the nation.”<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> House Space, Science, and Technology Committee.

<sup>2</sup> HASC Chairman Mac Thornberry, Opening Statement, June 12, 2017. Hearing on "The Fiscal Year 2018 National Defense Authorization Budget Request from the Department of Defense." <https://armedservices.house.gov/news/press-releases/chairman-thornberrys-opening-remarks-12>

As far as space funding, I think there are some positive trends in the FY18 Request, which I will briefly highlight. Tying in the DoD topline conversation, I also want to touch on the almost \$800 million of space requirements on the Air Force Unfunded Priorities List. I'd then like to spend the remainder of my remarks trying to frame this within the overall context of evaluating whether we are really on the way to "making space great again", or not. (Sorry, I couldn't resist!)

*Space Budget: Some Progress, but Not Enough (Space Topline)*

The FY18 budget request contains about \$9.8 billion for unclassified military space systems<sup>3</sup>, and I'm pleased that there is over 20% growth from FY17 space spending. I'm especially encouraged to see some important investments in R&D, an increase of over \$730 million compared to what was projected. With Space R&D spending having been at a 30-year low last year, the only way to go is up. And I certainly agree with many of the choices: invigorating Operationally Responsive Space, space training, space situational awareness, and unclassified counterspace and space control. Finally, putting real money into the National Space Defense Center, or NSDC, is overdue. According to the Air Force, this money will "transition [the NSDC] from an experimentation effort to an operational capability enhancing joint awareness, tactics, and doctrine for space."<sup>4</sup>

Space is finally a Major Force Program, MFP 12, in this year's budget, which is helpful in enhancing the traceability and visibility of overall investment in space. However, we need to make sure that the MFP actually captures the entire space budget in a clear, publicly available way. More transparency and visibility into the space budget will enable better Congressional oversight, and also better enable understanding and advocacy from the Hill as well as other stakeholders.

Stepping back and looking at the bigger budget picture, you have to ask, "Is this good enough?"

Compared to the overall DoD base budget, MFP 12 funding has only gone from 1.1% to 1.2% of the whole budget, despite growth of \$350 million. 0.1% growth is nothing to write home about, especially when you consider that we once spent easily ten times that much on space, as a share of the overall defense budget.

---

<sup>3</sup> Does not include NRO or other classified funding. FY17 appropriated was \$7.2B, compared to \$9.8B. Source: Office of the Undersecretary of Defense (Comptroller), "Defense Budget Overview: United States Department of Defense Fiscal Year 2018 Budget Request", p. 3-10. May 2017. Available:

[http://comptroller.defense.gov/Portals/45/Documents/defbudget/fy2018/fy2018\\_Budget\\_Request\\_Overview\\_Book.pdf](http://comptroller.defense.gov/Portals/45/Documents/defbudget/fy2018/fy2018_Budget_Request_Overview_Book.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> "United States Air Force Fiscal Year 2018 Budget Overview", p. 5. May 2017. Available:

<http://www.saffm.hq.af.mil/Portals/84/documents/FY2018%20Air%20Force%20Budget%20Overview%20Book%20FINAL.pdf?ver=2017-05-23-153529-293#page=15>

It's a slightly better picture when you look at all space spending, but not much. The \$9.8 billion for space went from 1.4% of the overall defense budget last year to 1.8% this year.

Simply put, underinvestment in space is a huge problem. Unfortunately, I don't think we're anywhere close to a place where we can stand up and cheer, much less declare mission accomplished. In fact, when you look at the gap between where we are and where we should be, you quickly get into the more important questions of what we are spending money on, and why.

The main questions we keep asking here on the Hill are:

- When it comes to defending ourselves in space, who is responsible? And do we have the right level of leadership, prioritization, resources and people focused on this problem?
- Despite all the talk about new threats, and a paradigm shift to warfighting, are we putting our money where our mouth is, both literally and figuratively?
- And, most important: How is anyone ever going to take responsibility for space, when no one's in charge?

#### *Space Budget: Some Progress, but Not Enough II (Unfunded Requirements)*

I will cite just one specific recent example from a budgeting standpoint. I am completely baffled that there are \$138 million of unfunded BMC2 requirements on the Air Force's list, as well as \$100 million of unfunded SSA requirements. From the former DEPSECDEF, to the current STRATCOM Commander and former and current Air Force Leadership, how many senior officials and officers at DoD have to say this is a priority for it to actually be a priority?

Testifying at SASC just last month, General Goldfein said this: "Ensuring that we truly *understand and can characterize the threat*, and then perhaps just as importantly as the constellations themselves, the *command and control architecture* that we are building in to first characterize and then be able to get the *decision speed* we need to *respond quickly* are all part of the space operating construct that we are working toward."<sup>5</sup>

General Raymond had similar words "I would characterize space as a warfighting domain just like air, land, and sea; [and] in any of those warfighting domains, you have to have the ability to *command and control* forces in

---

<sup>5</sup> General David Goldfein, Testimony, Senate Armed Services Strategic Forces Subcommittee Hearing on "Military Space Organization, Policy, And Programs". May 17, 2017.

that domain. You have to have the ability to have *space situational awareness* or situational awareness in that domain.”<sup>6</sup> If you asked anyone in the Department if SSA and BMC2 are top priorities, they would respond similarly, yet we have at least \$240 million of unfunded requirements here. I’m also still not convinced the dollars that we are spending are well spent, when it comes to fully embracing commercial and other non-traditional acquisition approaches. This one small example speaks volumes of needing leadership not just in terms of words, but in terms of actual dollars and level of prioritization and leadership.

When we talk about space, we seem to always talk about the Air Force, which is for obvious reasons, but we also need to remember that the Air Force is not the only Service in the space enterprise. For example, the Army has 4,000 soldiers in their space cadre, and are very good at training, development, and keeping a strong link between acquisition and operations.

But back to the issue of whether the Air Force can properly prioritize space, let’s face it: they have so many other things to buy, including new fighters, new tankers, new bombers, and of course new nuclear weapons, all of which are things we absolutely need to buy, but all of which are expensive. But the Air Force doesn’t have enough Space personnel, and the space personnel they do have unfortunately have the lowest promotion rates in the Air Force. Not enough people, who don’t get promoted enough, and who are also way under-represented in Air Force leadership. Of the fifty Generals currently on the Air Staff, guess how many space officers there are? Only one, or maybe two.<sup>7</sup>

Meanwhile, the rest of the DoD really just wants the Air Force to provide space services as cheaply as possible. Is that the space strategy that we want? To get as much as we can for as cheap as we can, and operate our satellites wherever and however it’s the most convenient? Especially when China can just decide overnight to form a new operational space, EW, and cyber force, and it just happens. And in case you weren’t paying attention, that’s precisely what they did a year and a half ago.<sup>8</sup>

---

<sup>6</sup> General John Raymond, Testimony, Senate Armed Services Strategic Forces Subcommittee Hearing on “Military Space Organization, Policy, And Programs”. May 17, 2017.

<sup>7</sup> The position is the Director, Space Programs, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Acquisition (SAF/AQS), currently filled by Maj. Gen. Roger Teague. The addition of the new Deputy Chief of Staff for Space Operations may add a second.

<sup>8</sup> China’s new Strategic Support Force, formed in January 2016, is a separate, co-equal branch of China’s military. See for example: “The Strategic Support Force: China’s Information Warfare Service”, <http://cimsec.org/strategic-support-force-chinas-information-warfare-service/27200>.

In 2015, Russia also created a new Aerospace Force, combining their “air forces, anti-air and anti-missile defenses and space forces” under a “unified command structure”. See for example: Matthew Bodner, “Russian Military Merges Air Force and Space Command”, *Moscow Times*. August 3, 2015. Available: <https://themoscowtimes.com/articles/russian-military-merges-air-force-and-space-command-48710>

### *Space Organization and Management: An Historical Perspective*

But let's step back and look at this briefly from an historical perspective. Those in here who know their space history realize that these issues aren't new. Just like King Solomon, the wisest man who ever lived, said:

**"There's nothing new under the sun."**<sup>9</sup>

In the late 1970's, we had the "Space Missions Organizational Planning Study", which, along with the Air Force's 1980 "Summer Study on Space", highlighted organizational deficiencies that prevented the Air Force from fully realizing opportunities in space, eventually leading to the creation of a new major command for space operations.

In 1981, the Air Staff created the Directorate for Space Operations, which conducted an intensive study on how to better organize to use space as a support tool in warfighting.

As we all know, Air Force Space Command was born shortly afterwards in 1982, bringing together the Aerospace Defense Center, Strategic Air Command, Air Force Systems Command, and Air Force Communications Command.

Meanwhile, Congress was pretty critical of space organization and management in the early 1980s.

In fact, Congressman Ken Kramer, who at that time represented Colorado Springs, introduced H.R. 5130, the Aerospace Force Act<sup>10</sup>, in 1982. Cosponsors included Newt Gingrich, Ike Skelton, and Duncan Hunter, Sr. Had it passed, this bill would have renamed the Air Force the **Aerospace** Force, and required the **Aerospace** Force be trained and equipped for prompt and sustained offensive and defensive operations in air and space, including coordination with ground and naval forces and the preservation of free access to space for U.S. spacecraft. Finally, the bill would have directed the Secretary of the **Aerospace** Force to report to Congress on the feasibility of establishing a separate space command.

The late 1990s saw renewed criticism from the Hill. Senator Bob Smith from New Hampshire, at that time Chairman of the SASC Strategic Forces Subcommittee, questioned whether the Air Force was committed to space power and threatened to seek creation of a separate space force.

---

<sup>9</sup> *The Bible*. Ecclesiastes 1:9 "What has been will be again, what has been done will be done again; there is nothing new under the sun. Is there anything of which one can say, 'Look! This is something new'? It was here already, long ago; it was here before our time. No one remembers the former generations, and even those yet to come will not be remembered by those who follow them."

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.congress.gov/bill/97th-congress/house-bill/5130/>

In a speech Senator Smith gave in 1998, he argued that the Air Force was “basically dedicated to supporting non-space forms of power projection. This is not space warfare. It is using space to support air, sea, and land warfare.”<sup>11</sup>

His concluding paragraph was fairly aggressive:

*If the Air Force cannot or will not embrace space power, we in Congress will have to drag them there, kicking and screaming if necessary, or perhaps establish an entirely new service. Drastic as that sounds, it is an increasingly real option that may be necessary to put this nation on a course toward space power. Frankly, I am less concerned with who delivers space power than I am committed to getting it done. This view is increasingly shared by my colleagues, and frankly all this foot-dragging is making the concept of a Space Force more likely.*<sup>12</sup>

Out of this concern, the FY 2000 NDAA authorized the Rumsfeld Commission.<sup>13</sup> In early 2001, the Commission finished its work, recommending significant organizational realignment and increased space responsibilities for the Air Force. In May of 2001, Secretary Rumsfeld announced a major national security space management and organizational initiative, designated the Air Force as the executive agent for space, and realigned SMC under Air Force Space Command.

One key excerpt from the 2001 Rumsfeld Commission sounds familiar to where we are today:

*Space capabilities are not funded at a level commensurate with their relative importance. Nor is there a plan in place to build up to the investments needed to modernize existing systems and procure new capabilities.*

The Commission recommended robust additional resources to accomplish new missions such as improved SSA, missile warning, and enhanced space protection, and also recommended “organizational changes to bring a more focused, well-directed approach to the conduct of national security space activities, based on a clear

---

<sup>11</sup> John A. Tirpak, “The Integration of Air & Space”, *Air Force Magazine*. July 2000. Available: <http://www.airforcemag.com/MagazineArchive/Documents/2000/July%202000/0700airandspace.pdf>

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> [FY2000 NDAA \(P.L. 106-65\), Section 1621-1629.](#)

national space policy directed by the President.”<sup>14</sup> Tragically, 9/11 happened shortly afterwards, resulting in most of these recommendations being shelved.

Fast-forwarding through the next fifteen years, there were three additional major studies: the Defense Science Board in 2003<sup>15</sup>, the Allard Commission in 2008, which famously found that “no one’s in charge” of space<sup>16</sup>, and a HPSCI Report in 2008<sup>17</sup>. Together with the Rumsfeld Commission, these studies made 28 recommendations related to space as a national security priority, unified leadership and authority, improved coordination, budget, planning, and acquisition. All of this was helpfully summarized by last year’s GAO Report, which was the main impetus behind the HASC Strategic Forces Subcommittee focus this past year on space reform.<sup>18</sup> We have had around half a dozen public hearings, and at least as many closed ones. I am very thankful for Chairman Rogers' leadership, but I want to be clear: the **rest** of the Subcommittee **shares** his concerns, as well as his sense of urgency to do anything but business as usual.

The good news is the American public is increasingly engaged in the space conversation. Space is suddenly hot again, so it seems, and we are seeing space stories in major newspapers, and on major networks, including pieces like CNN’s “War in Space” special last November.<sup>19</sup>

The other good news is that across DoD, industry, and the Hill, we all agree on the **challenge**: we are simply not well organized to maintain our leadership and competitive advantage in space. Gaining consensus on the **solution**, however, is obviously a lot more complicated. I think part of the lack of consensus stems from various opinions regarding **how urgent** the problem is. From there, come the various opinions about **how much reform is needed**. All I know is we can’t afford to rearrange the deck chairs, or simply do another study.

---

<sup>14</sup> “Report of the Commission to Assess United States National Security Space Management and Organization”, p. 143-4. January 11, 2001. Available: <http://www.dtic.mil/get-tr-doc/pdf?AD=ADA404328>

<sup>15</sup> Office of The Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition Technology and Logistics, “Report of the Defense Science Board/Air Force Scientific Advisory Board Joint Task Force on Acquisition of National Security Space Programs”. May 2003. Available: <http://www.dtic.mil/get-tr-doc/pdf?AD=ADA429180>

<sup>16</sup> Institute for Defense Analysis, “Report to Congress of the Independent Assessment Panel on the Organization and Management of national Security Space”, p. ES-3. July 2008. Available: <http://www.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/GetTRDoc?AD=ADA486551&Location=U2&doc=GetTRDoc.pdf>

<sup>17</sup> House Permanent Select Committee On Intelligence, “Report On Challenges and Recommendations for United States Overhead Architecture”. 110th Congress, 2nd Session, Report 110–914. October 3, 2008. Available: <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CRPT-110hrpt914/pdf/CRPT-110hrpt914.pdf>

<sup>18</sup> Government Accountability Office, Report 16-592R, “Defense Space Acquisitions: Too Early to Determine If Recent Changes Will Resolve Persistent Fragmentation in Management and Oversight”. July 27, 2016. Available: <http://www.gao.gov/assets/680/678697.pdf>

<sup>19</sup> CNN, “War in Space: The Next Battlefield”. Aired November 29, 2016. Available: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j-ZBLFhb\\_lg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j-ZBLFhb_lg)

## *Conclusion*

So many urgent questions demand fresh thinking:

- Who will think strategically about space warfare, develop doctrine for the space domain, build a space warrior culture, and ensure these space warriors have the best equipment money can buy?
- How will we develop our future space warriors, and ensure they are truly focused on warfighting, rather than engineering?
- Who will think long and hard about training and preparing for a contest in a domain where none has occurred before?
- Who will take the risk to fully embrace new thinking, including non-traditional acquisition approaches, and actually leveraging the private sector to the maximum extent possible, instead of just paying lip service to doing it?
- Who will solve the hard problems, for example how to grow our rapid launch and rapid reconstitution capabilities, taking a hard look at smallsats and even cubesats?

We **absolutely must work together** to figure all of this out, which is why an event like this one today is such a great opportunity. The dialogue is important, but taking the appropriate **action** is even more important. As you know better than anyone else, our potential enemies are not sitting still. Our future literally depends on our getting it right.